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ABSTRACT

This report describes a method for increasing parental involvement in physical education and art in an elementary school in Illinois. The parents of second- and third-grade students in a well-developed, middle class community in Illinois participated in the study. The lack of parental involvement had been documented through data revealing the low percentage of parents involved in their child's education. Various factors for lack of involvement included parents feeling unimportant, over-extended, uninformed about today's curriculum, transportation difficulties, and lack of child care. Schools were also at fault for making parents feel unwelcome, belittling and neglecting parents, and being oblivious to parents' willingness to participate. Four types of intervention were utilized to increase parental involvement, including: (1) student journals; (2) bimonthly newsletters; (3) parent contact log; and (4) Fine Arts Experiences. Results of the interventions employed during the school year indicated an increase in parental involvement with parents willing to review student journals and attend the Fine Arts Experiences with their child. (EH)

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IMPROVING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN ELEMENTARY ART AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Penny J. Kentz
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ABSTRACT

This report describes a method for increasing parental involvement in physical education and art. The targeted population consisted of the parents of second and third grade students in a well developed, middle class community in Illinois. The lack of parental involvement was documented through data revealing the low percentage of parents involved in their child's education.

In analyzing the probable cause data it revealed that parent reluctance comes from feeling unimportant, over extended, uninformed about today's curriculum, an inability to arrange for transportation and child care when concerned about their child's education. The data also revealed that the schools were also at fault. Teachers haven't utilized parents for many reasons. Some of the reasons include: making them feel not welcome, belittling and neglecting parents, and oblivious to their willingness to participate.

In researching solution strategies of knowledgeable others and reviewing our problem setting it has been concluded that four types of interventions will be utilized in order to increase parental involvement: student journals, bimonthly newsletters, parent contact log, and Fine Arts Experiences.

Results of the interventions employed during the school year indicated an increase in parental involvement. Parents were willing to review student journals, and attend the Fine Arts Experiences with their child.

CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

Problem Statement

The parents of the students in the targeted art and physical education programs show a lack of interest and understanding towards both disciplines, which leads to a lack of personal contact throughout the school year limiting the support of these programs. Evidence for the existence of the problem includes teacher logs that document parental contact at school events (i.e. curriculum night, parent conferences), a parent survey and anecdotal records.

Immediate Problem Context

The site is part of a large unit school district. The district is the second largest in the state. The site has a population of 386 students in kindergarten through sixth grade. The majority, 97% of the student body, walk to school, the remaining students, who are exceptional needs students are bused. The site has a middle-income population. More than half of the students are on the district's free or reduced lunch program.

This school is a feeder school for the Spanish Bilingual Program. In this school there are five Spanish bilingual classes. Based on the information provided by the parents, the ethnic breakdown of this site is as follows: 43.0% Caucasian, 5.4%

African, 42.5% Hispanic, and 9.1% Asian. These students derive from the surrounding suburban community.

This site is a two story building with two wings, the primary and the intermediate. The intermediate wing was the original building built in the 1930's. The adjacent primary wing was added on later with the gym in the 1960's. The building is currently under construction for additional classrooms and a multipurpose room. The school has ten general education teachers who teach in self-contained classrooms. Two special education teachers and three assistants teach the two exceptional needs classes. The Spanish Bilingual staff consists of five teachers and five teacher assistants.

The site's staff also includes a music teacher, a physical education teacher, a librarian, and two art teachers who share the school. There is also an adaptive physical education teacher and music therapist who service the special education classes. The support staff consist of: a social worker, a speech and language teacher, a collaborative interventionist, a learning disabilities resource teacher, a Chapter 1 teacher, and a full time nurse.

The administrative staff consists of a principal, a full time secretary, a part time secretary, a clerical aide/lunch supervisor, and a Spanish home-school liaison. The custodial staff employs a full time day and night custodian.

The Surrounding Community

The district that services this site is a large unit school district, it has 48 schools. This district is spread over three counties encompassing many communities.

The community that feeds into this site is a suburb of a major city in the mid-west. The population is 35,379. The

Spanish population is 5,488. Of this entire population, 2,922 students are serviced by this school district, the remaining student population, that live in this city, are serviced by two other school districts.

The community contains many single family homes as well as apartment buildings. Some residents live in subsidized housing. Most of the real estate in this community has been developed, primarily, residential and commercial. The community is a predominantly middle income suburb. Blue collar jobs are the main source of income.

This district has been burdened by strikes for many years. These strikes have caused undue arrest throughout the communities. The strikes in this district have caused a lack of parental support.

In 1994, a referendum was passed by a narrow margin, but not before effecting the outcome of many departments in the district for the 1994-1995 school year. Art, music, and P.E. were hit severely hard. Each department was cut to half staff. These fine arts programs on the elementary level were offered only half of the school year.

Currently, the elementary art, music, and P.E. programs are back to full staff. The district employs 31 elementary art teachers and 30 elementary P.E. teachers who provide services to the district's 39 elementary schools.

Elementary art is taught for 45 minutes a week in grades one through six, 30 minutes a week in kindergarten and some special education classes. Most elementary art teachers have more than one school. The majority of the art teachers teach off of a cart. Art teachers wheel supplies, including water, to the student's

classroom. A few teachers are fortunate enough to have art rooms.

The art department curriculum has not been firmly established since the induction of a full time art staff in the fall of 1991. As a result of the prior cuts, the development of the curriculum was delayed. The department is currently looking at revising and establishing a more defined and specific curriculum.

Elementary P.E. is taught once a week. Kindergartners receive 25 minutes of P.E., first through third graders, 30 minutes, and fourth through sixth graders, 40 minutes. Most elementary P.E. teachers teach at two to three schools.

The elementary P.E. curriculum dates back to 1986. As a result of staff reductions in past years, the curriculum has not been addressed. The elementary staff conducts the Fitnessgram fitness test each year during the fall semester.

There is a presence of gang activity in this community. A Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) officer from the community is involved with the students throughout the school year. The officer works very closely with the third and fifth grade students. Upon completion of this extensive program the children all take an oath that they will abide by the rules set forth by the program.

National Context or the Problem

Fine arts programs are not the only programs that notice a lack of parental support. Parental support is an issue in many parts of the nation in all subject areas. Epstein (as cited in Vergilio, 1990) concluded from a survey of 1,270 parents and 3,700 teachers, that over 75% of parents never helped or participated in school functions.

This percentage is overwhelming considering the benefit

parental involvement can have on education. "According to Epstein (1983) parental involvement contributes to a rise in achievement test scores, an increase in student attendance, reduction of dropouts, and an improvement of student motivation and self-esteem" (Vergilio, 1990, p. 6).

It is evident that many parents seem unaware and uninterested in the positive input they can have in their child's education. In a study conducted in 1992 by Sylvan Learning Centers and the National Association of Secondary School Principals, findings indicated that the level of parental involvement should be much higher (Johns, 1994).

Perhaps all of the blame should not be placed on the parents. Teachers themselves can be quite reluctant to let parents into their schools. The idea of parental intimidation and the inability to work with parents can be a great barrier for teachers to overcome (Wilcox, 1988). Included with this can be the old adage that teachers are teachers and know what is best, and that parents have little to offer (Wilcox, 1988). These beliefs have turned parents away from their childrens' classrooms for years.

Parents may also have other reasons for lack of support. These can include: feelings of uneasiness in a school setting, no transportation, child care, or time, and low literacy skills in English (Macfarlane, 1996). Another concern for parents is lack of confidence. "Some people have very little confidence that they know how to help their children, and therefore prefer to leave the whole process to the professionals" (Macfarlane, 1996, p. 11). Many of these concerns can contribute to the parents unwillingness to help.

If both parents and teachers can surrender their inadequacies about their involvement in a child's education, a greater result can be achieved. Not only will the child benefit, but the teacher and parents will benefit as well. Comer (as cited in Vergilio, 1990), states, "Studies in New Haven, Connecticut between 1969 and 1984 indicated that parent participation in school activities improved parent-teacher relations, revitalized both parents and teachers and had a positive impact on the students (p. 66).

The rationale for the involvement of parents in education is best said by Osborne (as cited in Wilcox, 1988), "It seems almost too obvious to say that no two groups of people could be more interested in and concerned about children than are parents and teachers" (p. 19).

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

Problem Evidence

Problem evidence on the lack of parent involvement was gathered from three sources: parent surveys, anecdotal records, and parent contact log. The parent survey was used to document the parents' awareness of the elementary art and physical education programs, their thoughts on the necessity of the program, and the availability of parents to attend a fine arts night. Anecdotal records were kept to document contact with parents at open house and parent-teacher conferences. The parent contact log was used to keep track of parent contacts with teachers during the regular school week.

Parent Survey

The first source used to gather problem evidence was the parent survey. Of the 70 second and third grade elementary students targeted in the study, only 48 parents returned the surveys. The first question asked, " Are you aware that there is an art and P.E. program in your child's school?" Ninety-four percent of the parents answered, "Yes", that they were aware of the programs. The remaining 6% answers varied from "No", to "unaware of art" and "I hope there is P.E. in school".

The second and fourth question were similar in that they

specifically asked for the name of their child's art and P.E. teacher. A summary of the answers to both questions are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Categories and Number of Response out of 48 Returned Surveys

Categories	Number of Responses
Named art teacher	30
Named P.E. teacher	33
Didn't know art teacher	12
Didn't know P.E. teacher	9
Named someone else	3
Named student teacher*	3

*The P.E. teacher had a student teacher who taught classes during the time that the survey was distributed.

The third and fifth question asked, "Do you feel your child needs art? Why or why not?" and "Do you feel your child needs P.E.? Why or why not?" respectively. Forty-five of the parents answered, "yes",to the first part of questions three and five. Five parents left explanation as to why with no affirmative yes and one parent answered "yes" and "no". Four parents did not answer the questions. Some responses to the need for art were, "builds imagination", "allows for creativity" and "provides a tool for expression." Responses for P.E. were "builds coordination", "promotes team cooperation" and "a healthy body is a contributing factor to a healthy mind." Despite the valid reasons parents gave for P.E. and art in school, only 68% of the 70 parents surveyed felt the surveys were important enough to fill out and return. In

addition, only 62% of the answers for questions two and four correctly identified both the P.E. and art teachers. Although 45 of the 48 responded yes and gave explanation as to the need for P.E. and art, it was found that the anecdotal records do not reflect this same sentiment. Not only were parent surveys used to collect data, daily anecdotal records were also kept by both teachers.

Anecdotal Records

The second source used to collect evidence was anecdotal records. The open house began with a general meeting for all parents. At the end of the meeting the principal announced the presence and location of the art and P.E. teachers to the parents. Of the 70 students in this study, none approached the teachers at open house. For the entire hour of open house, only one parent talked to the art and P.E. teacher about their child. Anecdotal records on parent-teacher conferences noted the same response, no parent contact. This lack of parent involvement suggests that the parents are not interested in finding out what is going on in both art and physical education classes at their child's school. Besides using anecdotal records, a parent contact log was kept by each teacher to record daily parent contact.

Parent Contact Log

The third source used to collect evidence was the parent contact log. The log contains the name of the child, type of contact, and a reason for contact. Of the 70 students involved in the study, one contact was made within the first four weeks of school. This contact was pertaining to a child's injury and reason for participation, through a note. No contacts were made in regard to the study.

Although 67% of the parent surveys were returned and answered with great enthusiasm, not one parent has approached either teacher with any interest in helping out with the study. In fact, only one parent contact was recorded, through anecdotal records at the open house. None of the parents of the students involved in the study tried to meet their child's P.E. and art teacher. Even though the classroom teachers were previously asked to remind parents of the teachers presence in the multi-purpose room, parents were still reluctant to stop by.

Parent contact logs have been kept and no parental contact has been made to the teachers regarding anything pertaining to the study. Both teachers have had one separate contact from parents, however the contacts have not been related to the study. Evidence has been presented regarding the lack of parent involvement. The next section explores the causes for this problem.

Probable Causes

There are three probable causes that contribute to the lack of parent involvement in art and P.E. Some stem from the parents and others from the teachers. These causes consist of: the parents themselves, school climate including teachers, and academic value placed on the fine arts.

Parents

The first cause for lack of parent involvement is placed on the parents. Many have two careers, which leaves little time for outside activities. Parents may be too busy to help out at school, or have other obligations. As stated by Macfarlane (1996), child care, transportation problems and lack of confidence can hinder parental involvement. The following evidence (Table 2) states the conflicts that the parents had with attending the Fine

Arts Experience.

The parent survey asked parents to choose an evening of the week in which they would be able to attend a Fine Arts Experience. Besides choosing a particular night of the week, they were also asked why they might not be able to attend. Some of the choices that they had to pick from were: child care, work, transportation, and other reasons.

Table 2

Conflicts Keeping Parents from Attending the Fine Arts Experience

Conflicts	Number of Responses
Work	12
Child care	6
Transportation	3
Other	3
None	28

Bracey (1996) noted that the parents seemed willing to help their children, however, because of their personal workload, they lacked the energy for actual participation. Other parents feel school should educate their children. Parents would rather devote their time to having fun, then doing school work with their children. One parent stated, "I want the school to educate my child. I don't want to get papers and things to do at home. I just want to come home and get a hug and love and laugh" (as cited in Rich, 1994, p. 35). Parents feeling overwhelmed is not the only contributor, teachers and the school climate play an important role as well.

School Climate

An unwelcomed climate is not a positive setting for parental involvement. Parents may feel reluctant to volunteer because they feel uncomfortable at school (Macfarlane, 1996). It is the school's obligation to welcome parents and allow them to share in their child's education. Teachers also do not make the effort to contact parents. "If teachers believe that parents are not interested in becoming involved in their children's schooling, teachers make fewer efforts to contact, inform, and work with them..." (Epstein & Dauber, 1991, p. 299). Another reason why teachers do not involve parents is because they teach a greater number of students which makes it difficult to get to know the student's parents (Epstein & Dauber, 1991). A positive school climate will increase parent involvement but fine arts teachers will also need to stress the importance of their subjects academic value.

Academic Value

A reason for the lack of parent involvement in the fine arts could derive from the misunderstanding of the subject area. Some feel that fine arts are not needed. Parents may feel the pressure of society and have determined that arts are a mere thrill and entertainment source (Hanna, 1992). Although experts agree that a well rounded education includes the fine arts, some parents disagree. They feel that the arts take away from the other subjects that prepare students for their future (Hanna, 1992). Parents also may not understand about the fine arts and what they offer their child.

Evidence of this attitude toward academic value is seen at the site. Recently at the Curriculum Night, the principal called

a general meeting to inform the parents of the happenings at the school. Afterwards a general announcement was made that the art and physical education teachers would be available to meet with the parents. Although the survey showed that parents were supportive of the art and physical education curriculums, only one parent made the effort to meet with the fine arts teachers.

The lack of parent involvement in art and P.E. deals with three major influences. The first being the parents themselves and their willingness to become involved. The second deals with school climate and the school allowing and providing the opportunity for parents too become involved. The final influence pertains to academic value. Parents need to understand the importance and benefits of P.E. and art in their child's education and become involved.

To combat this problem parents, schools and teachers must unite together. All must make the effort to include one another in the process of educating the child. Parents and schools have to agree that educating children is far too large of a task to accomplish alone.

Chapter 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Literature Review

The lack of parent involvement can be attributed to four areas in education. These areas consist of: home, school, parents, and teachers. Each area is as important as the other, and each has various solutions to correct the problem.

Home

The first link in the chain has to deal with the home setting. The reinforcement of school at home between child and parent is an integral part of a child's education (Rich, 1994). There are various reinforcement activities that parents can do with their children on a daily and or weekly basis. Such activities include: family contracts, dinner discussions, homework helpers, home activities, and supervision of learning activities.

Family contract. A Family contract is a contract developed by the family as a unit to outline when learning activities and recreational activities will be scheduled (Vergilio, 1990). The family as a whole schedules what physical and learning activities they will take part in and when they will occur. These activities build family closeness by allowing everyone to take part in the decision making process. Upon completion of the contract, rewards

could be given. These awards give the family, as a unit, a sense of accomplishment. Examples of recreational activities that are to be used on the contract are Fitness Trail, and Wake Up Workout (Vergilio, 1990). Fitness Trail is a mapped out route with fitness stations at various stops (Vergilio, 1990). Wake Up Workout is a ten minute workout performed at home before school (Vergilio, 1990). If the use of family contracts is not an option, starting with something simple, such as a family dinner discussion, can be a solution.

Dinner discussion. Another reinforcement is family dinner discussions. "Talking with children about what they are learning during a family meal is something most parents can do, once they realize its importance" (Macfarlane, 1996, p. 10). Family dinner discussions enable children to discuss their school day with their parents. By doing this, parents show interest in their child's education and become informed about everyday activities. "A 1994 Reader's Digest survey revealed students who ate at least four meals a week with their families scored higher on academic tests than kids with three family meals or less per week" (Condor, 1997 p. 10). Discussions don't just have to be at dinner either. If schedule conflicts prevail, parents need to make themselves available for children who need to talk. Doherty (as cited in Condor, 1997) suggests, parents need to understand that something, if it is only one meal a week, is better than nothing if done correctly. Besides dinner discussions, parents can become involved through their children's homework.

Homework helpers. Homework helpers, as a reinforcement, is also beneficial to children. This is the most widely used method by classroom teachers for home communication (Vergilio, 1990).

Teachers send home additional worksheets that enhance lessons learned that day. Home activities are also good reinforcement tools. These are pages parents and children can do together, using common household materials. These simple activities give great feeling of accomplishment to both the parent and the child. (Rich, 1994). Home activities are geared to creating greater family closeness and stronger education for the student (Rich, 1994). However, to best benefit the student, these activities should be a continuation of the students daily lesson, not just a duplication (Vergilio, 1990). Homework helpers work best when there is home supervision.

Home supervision. The last reinforcement activity is home supervision. This particular activity has the potential to involve all parents (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991). Most parents have the opportunity to do this activity, since it requires little deviance from their daily schedule. Parents simply should be available during their child's homework time to answer questions and monitor their childs' progress. If involvement in PTA councils or as a classroom volunteer is not an option, then homework supervision is a positive alternative (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991).

Home is a great place to reinforce what children are learning in school. Parents can become involved through family contracts, dinner discussions, homework helpers, and home supervision. These are great opportunities for parents to encourage their child's education and to show support and concern for what they are learning in school.

School

The school has to face the responsibilities of their role in

all of the students' educations. The school needs to capitalize on the parents as a useful resource in the process. Parents also need to learn the importance of continuing the education process at home. According to Rich (1994):

> The message we have to get across to our students' parents is that educational responsibilities continue well past the time the child goes off to school. Families must continue to provide reinforcement and to work with children to provide the help it takes to do well in school. No matter how good the school is, it cannot do the job alone. (p. 35)

Schools also need to provide an open climate for parents. Parents need to be allowed to be decision makers through PTA, or school advisory committees, or parent advisory councils. Stressing the importance of home-school collaboration is the key to the success of parent involvement programs (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991).

Other ways to involve parents are: parent education classes, school visitation days, art and health fairs, parent volunteers, lunch visitation, accommodating the community, school liaisons, parent resource room, and an informational phone line.

Educating parents. One step that can be taken to insure that parents become involved with their child's education is to educate the parents. Showing parents how to encourage and support their children and to build in them a sense of accomplishment is one thing schools can provide (Macfarlane, 1996). By educating parents, they will feel more comfortable helping out their child. Parents who know what to do will have more confidence and will be more willing to help. Educating parents to become involved in their child's education can be enhanced by having the parents

frequently visit their child's school.

School visitation days. Schools can also benefit parents and students by going beyond the classroom. School visitation days are one way in which parents and teachers are afforded the opportunity to meet and discuss their childs' education. Such visitation days occur during a normal school day (Wilcox, 1987). If parents are working, coordinating their lunch hours with their child's maybe another option.

Lunch visitation. In addition, schools can also provide parent-student lunch times. In the Wagner and Guttman (1995) study, a Houston elementary school invited parents to eat lunch with their children. This can also be a form of alternate parent involvement. Although this is not a convenient time, it might be the only time a parent has to interact with their child and to show their interest in his or her education. If during school activities aren't possible for parents to attend, perhaps after school or evening activities, such as art and health fairs would provide a more convenient time for parents to become involved.

Art and health fairs. Art fairs and health fairs are also two good methods to get parents involved. An art fair would give the parents and students an opportunity to perform an art lesson together upon which students and parents complete an art project from the curriculum (D'Amico, 1994). Health fairs involve local hospitals, fitness experts, and medical staff which in turn determine the physical aptitudes of all who attend (Vergilio, 1990). Booths are set up in the gymnasium and participants are encouraged to move around to gain the necessary information needed to improve their fitness levels and overall well being (Vergilio, 1990). Art and health fairs are just two occasions that would

greatly benefit from parent volunteers.

Parent volunteers. The most common form of parent involvement is through parent aides and parent volunteers. Parents work with the teacher in the classroom aiding in various activities and situations (Vergilio, 1990). Parent volunteers are an essential part in accommodating the community. The more parents involved, the more options schools have when problems arise.

Accommodating the community. Schools are also responsible for accommodating the community. It is important for the school to recognize the make up of their community so it can accommodate every aspect to it's best potential. This includes: offering transportation and or car pooling, and providing child care services so parents can be involved (Macfarlane, 1996). Quite often schools see these issues as the problem of the families and not the schools, however, if schools and teachers want the parents involved, then they must provide the necessary services to insure that all parents have the opportunity to be involved. This includes providing alternate times and locations to allow the majority of parents to attend (Macfarlane, 1996).

Schools are also responsible for providing an open climate for parents to attend meetings. As stated by Lawler (1991), the initial meeting of a parent should be one which includes a warm, welcomed greeting. The atmosphere should be positive, relaxed, and unhurried. "There has to be a tone set among all school staff that says,'We want you here.'"(Gutloff, 1997, p. 5). It is important to remember to be sensitive to the social and economic needs of the parents involved (Swick, 1995). Providing for the community also recognizes possible language barriers which school

liaisons can aide in bridging.

School liaison. If a language barrier exists between home and school, the school should provide a liaison and or interpreter (Macfarlane, 1996). The interpreter can be used to translate conversations when there is a language barrier at school between students and teachers. The liaison can help bridge communication gaps between home and school when different languages are spoken. In some cases, students speak the native language but their parents do not, therefore liaisons can translate teacher letters and school bulletins to keep the parents informed. Liaisons not only offer ways for parents to help children with their studies, they also encourage parents to become involved in the school (Griffis, 1997). Once liaisons and volunteers are established, a resource room for these assistants would be a great benefit.

Parent resource room. A new and innovative way to get parents involved is to establish a parent resource room within the school (Gutloff, 1997). This room allows parents to meet other parents in a relaxed atmosphere and provides literature on various academic and fine art subjects. This room can also be used to complete family homework assignments (Vergilio, 1990). "When you create a place for parents, you send the message that they really belong here" (Gutloff, 1997, p. 5). Along with the resource room, a phone line can be established to add parent contact.

Phone line. A new and innovative way to get parents informed as to what is happening in the classroom and at school is to set up a phone line (NEA Today, 1997). A phone line is a very useful tool in that it allows parents to call in at their convenience to find out information relating to their child and their classroom. In Starkville, Mississippi, a phone line was set up at an

elementary school (Forde, Polk, & Butler, 1997). "The call in line is helping us gauge the pulse of the community more accurately, respond more quickly to parents' complaints, and even do a better job of recruiting school volunteers" (Forde, Polk, & Butler, 1997, p. 42).

This device is relatively cost efficient to set up. All that is needed is a telephone, answering machine, and a second phone line (NEA Today, 1997). It was decided by the staff members that this line should be kept open 24 hours a day to accommodate all parents (Forde, Polk, & Butler, 1997). Some schools have gone the distance to even set up individual voice mail boxes for each teacher (NEA Today, 1997).

This device enables the school and it's staff to learn about the concerns of it's parents, students, and community. "We believe it will encourage more parent involvement in schools and give the school officials a better sense of what the public wants from its schools" (Forde, Polk, & Butler, 1997, p. 43).

Schools can provide many opportunities for parents. Through educating parents, providing school and lunch visitation days, art and health fairs, encouraging parent volunteers,and accommodating the community. When schools do their part to get parents involved, the child will benefit.

Parents

Parents often think of what the school and teachers can do for their children. The third and missing link is quite often the parents themselves and the important role they offer into the recipe for educating their children towards becoming life long learners. From the time parents walk through the front doors of a school they should understand and realize the role they must play

in their child's education so that the child experiences nothing but success. Schools can provide the activities for parents, but parents need to attend and utilize these resources. Parents can contribute and keep abreast of their child's education by attending: seminars, P.T.A. demonstrations, parent education classes, conferences, and by reading newsletters.

Seminars. Seminars are one avenue for parents to become involved. This is where monthly meetings are conducted by guest speakers who provide their expertise on physical education, visual arts, and academics (Vergilio, 1990). Parents can get together to hear guest speakers who specialize in one area of their child's curriculum. Parents can become more informed and have a better understanding of what is taught to their child. This understanding can lead to better confidence and more opportunity to contribute in helping their child. The child will also benefit because the parent will be knowledgeable about the subject area and be willing to help. If a monthly meeting that deals with a specific subject matter is not an option, then attending a yearly meeting that discusses all academic areas would be a better choice.

P.T.A. demonstrations. PTA demonstrations occur once a year to inform the parents of the learning activities going on in their child's classroom. Usually these demonstrations center around a main theme that ties in all areas of academic subjects, as well as the fine arts. Along with P.T.A. demonstrations, parent education classes give the parents the hands on experiences needed to better understand what their children are learning.

Parent education classes. Parent education classes should and need to be offered. These classes provide parents with

information about unfamiliar subjects such as physical education, music, and art and their importance in education (Wilcox, 1987). Parents can do hands on activities similar to what their child will experience. These activities will give them a guideline when interacting with their child's homework or projects. The more knowledge parents have, the more comfortable they will be in helping with homework. Moreover, children will benefit by having an expert at school and a confident resource at home. Once the parents are educated, they will be able to use the newsletters to benefit themselves, as well as for their children.

Newsletter. Keeping parents informed about curriculum, school news, and bulletins is necessary for all to be involved within the school setting. Newsletters provide ample opportunity to promote every parent's involvement in influencing programs (Swick, 1995). By providing newsletters, teachers can keep parents informed about activities in the classroom. Teachers can also solicit help for upcoming events. Newsletters allow parents to understand what the child is doing and provide information about subjects being taught. Parents can then discuss these subjects with their child and find out what they are learning. Newsletters inform parents about school activities, where as conferences inform parents about the child's progress.

Conferences. Conferences allow parents the time to share their thoughts and feeling about their child's education. This allows an open avenue for discussion between parents and teachers (Swick, 1995). Conferences should not be reserved for only negative situations, they should also be used to acknowledge positive strides the student has accomplished.

There are many avenues for parents to become involved in

their child's education. Parents should be aware that schools send home newsletters each month, as well as conduct parent te ner conferences each semester. What parents might not be aware of are parent education classes, seminars, and PTA demonstrations, all of which are possibilities for parents to become involved in at their child's school. The final area to increase parent involvement involves teachers.

Teachers

Teachers are the fourth and final link in the chain of parent involvement. There are two ways in which teachers can promote parent involvement. The first is to produce activities for parents to help with their children. Materials for read alouds, or information about upcoming television shows that relate to course content are just two examples of teacher promoted activities.

Teacher guided material for parents. Read alouds are a wonderful way for both parents and children to enjoy a book (Cohen, 1997). Parents should pick a time, when they and their child, will be uninterrupted, and read a book together. According to Cohen (1997):

> Reading aloud does much more than promote readiness for future reading instruction. It is an integral part of the process of learning to make sense of print. Parents who read to their children do not only produce children who can read but also children who have acquired a strong disposition for reading and learning. (p. 71)

Parents should understand that shared reading with their children is still important after the child learns to read by themselves. Parents have the ability to expose their children to stories that

may still be difficult for them (Home and School Connection, 1997).

Another way teachers can involve parents is to provide information on community programs, local exhibits, and upcoming television programs that pertain to classroom material. Teachers can provide times and locations so parents can be aware of these events and make time to share these experiences with their children.

The second part of teachers' involvement with parents deals with themselves. Requiring parent involvement classes, as well as ongoing training, and parent recruitment are ways in which teachers can help themselves.

Parent involvement classes. Prior to becoming certified teachers, parent involvement classes should be required to receive their bachelor's degree and their certification. This should also be available to teachers already in the field (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991). Along with classes on parent involvement, techniques should be taught to involve parents. The need to change educators attitudes and beliefs towards parent involvement is one that needs to be stressed immediately. Changing educators attitudes will not only benefit the student, but the teacher, school and community as well.

Another important way to involve teachers is to provide ongoing training and administrative support for creating strong school/home partnerships (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991). Administration needs to encourage teacher parent relations and provide the means to do so. Principals need to keep a breast of the trends in education and take courses themselves on parent involvement. Upon educating administrators, teachers will benefit

from their positive support and new ideas. They will also provide a good model for teachers, just like parents can do for their children (Clark, 1995). Requiring parent involvement classes alone in not the solution. Teachers need to actively solicit help and provide alternative choices for parents to contribute within the classroom.

Additional types of involvement. Additional education is not the only improvement teachers can make. Teachers need to experiment with new ways to promote parent involvement. Actively soliciting help would be the first step in this process (Shalaway, 1994). Starting up a volunteer program immediately and having sign up lists would be the second (Shalaway, 1994). Third, teachers should allow parents a variety of activities to choose from (Shalaway, 1994). Fourth, teachers need to use the parents as a resource, through personal cultural experiences, occupations, or careers (Shalaway, 1994). Fifth, teachers need to provide the parents alternative options outside of the classroom, such as typing stories for the newsletter or baking cupcakes for a party (Shalaway, 1994). The final, important way to get parents involved is to turn negative attitudes into positive attitudes (Shalaway, 1994). Parents need to be made to feel that they are needed and accepted. They must be shown that they can all contribute, whether it be a large or small contribution, and that everyone will benefit (Shalaway, 1994).

The blame for lack of parent involvement can not rest on one set of shoulders. Teachers, parents, home and school all have to burden the responsibility. The burden would not seem as heavy if they could unite together and contribute their share for the benefit of the child.

Project Objectives and Processes

As a result of the use of strategies to increase parental involvement in art and physical education, during the period of September, 1997 through December, 1997, the parents of the targeted second and third grade students will show an increase in contact as measured by student journals, and parent contact logs.

In order to accomplish the objective, the following processes are necessary:

1. Develop an atmosphere conducive to parent involvement.
2. Develop activities to incorporate parental involvement.

Project Action Plan

The following action plan was designed to improve parental contact using: student journals, parent letter, parent questionnaire, parent contact logs, bimonthly newsletter and Fine Art Experiences.

Students will keep a weekly journal in art and physical education. This journal will allow the student to reflect on weekly lessons in both disciplines. Students will take home journals twice a month to share with parents and obtain parent signature. This activity will occur the length of the study. The purpose of these journals is to make parents aware of the weekly activities and allow students to share their experiences with their parents.

A parent letter will be sent home the first week of school informing parents of the upcoming activities we will be incorporating. The week following, a parent questionnaire will be distributed. Reminders will be sent intermittently until the majority of the questionnaires are returned.

Parent contact logs will be documented from the beginning of

the school year by both, P.E. and art teachers. Information such as: student name, date, type of contact and comments will be logged. This will be an ongoing record throughout the length of the study. The purpose of this log is to assess parental contact through various means of communication (i.e. letters, phone calls, personal encounters or at special events).

Bimonthly newsletters will include class activities and information about upcoming events. This newsletter will be sent out twice a month starting the third week of school. The first newsletter will explain procedures and general information for the year. Thereafter, the newsletter will highlight weekly lessons and contain insights from individual students.

Fine Arts Experiences will be implemented at least once during the study. The goal for these experiences is to allow parents and students to enjoy an art and physical education activity together. Parents will be introduced to the benefit of fine arts in their child's education. This experience will instill the importance of these programs and allow the parents to encounter the art and P.E. curriculums first hand. This will be initiated during the seventh week of the study, but final scheduling will depend on the parents availability.

Methods of Assessment

In order to determine the effects on parental involvement, parent contact logs and student journals will be kept. Fine Arts Experiences will also assess the degree to which the parents are involved. Bimonthly newsletters will be used to keep the parents informed of the lessons and activities being taught each week.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Description of the Intervention

The project objective for our action research was to increase parent contact within the physical education and art programs. The intervention included: parent questionnaire, student journals, parent letter, parent contact logs, bimonthly newsletters and a Fine Arts Experience.

During the first week of school, a letter (Appendix A) was sent home to parents regarding the action research project and how their students would be involved in the study. Student journals (Appendix B) were explained to both the second and third grade students. These journals were implemented during the art and P.E. classes. Journals were sent home during the fall semester and during the spring semester to review with their parents and obtain signatures. A parent questionnaire (Appendix C) was sent home to find out the knowledge parents had regarding their child's art and P.E. programs, and to obtain information as to which night would be best to hold a Fine Arts Experience. A Fine Arts Experience was held on November 18, 1997 and April 7, 1998 (Appendix D). These experiences allowed parents and their children to participate in both a P.E. and an art activity. From the survey, the teachers determined that Tuesday evening was the best night

for maximum participation. November 18th was chosen because of the school schedule and to avoid the upcoming holiday.

A parent contact log (Appendix E) was also kept by both the art and P.E. teachers. This particular log was used to keep track of any parent contact the teachers had during the study. A monthly fine arts newsletter (Appendix F) was sent home to notify parents of the activities that their children were doing in art and P.E. In addition, a post parent survey (Appendix G) was sent home in the spring. This survey asked which interventions worked best for involving the parents in art and P.E., it also asked questions regarding monthly newsletters and student journals.

During the action research project it was necessary to modify the original intervention. The first deviation from the original plan was the bimonthly newsletter, which was changed to a monthly newsletter. Newsletters were sent home during the months of September, October, and one for November/December. Due to district "switch days" (days in which specials were switched because school wasn't in session on a certain day of the week), and the limited contact time (holidays, classroom parties, teacher institute days, and field trips), the decision was made to send out a monthly newsletter. For the following three months a fine arts article was submitted to the monthly school newsletter (Appendix H). Limited contact time was also a contributing factor in the decision to contribute to the school newsletter rather than creating a separate newsletter.

The second deviation occurred with the sending home of student journals. The original intention was for the second and third grade students to take their journals home twice a month. The journals went home once during the fall semester and once

during the spring semester. This plan was altered due to lack of teacher contact time (holidays, classroom parties, teacher institute days, field trips, and switch days) with the students. It was also a concern of the teachers that the majority of the journals would not be returned. This fear resulted from the limited contact time the art and P.E. teacher had and that they were only in the building the last two days of the week, which made it very difficult to monitor the return of the journals. The P.E. and art teachers felt that by sending the journals home twice a month, they would be depending upon the classroom teacher to monitor and control the distribution of journals. The researchers felt this would be too demanding of the classroom teacher's time.

The third deviation resulted in the addition of a second Fine Arts Experience on Tuesday, April 7, 1998. This second Fine Arts Experience was added due to the success of the first event. The teachers concluded from the first event and the parent survey that Tuesday evening would allow for maximum parent participation. They also determined this date based on the availability of the school.

The fourth deviation resulted in a post parent survey. This survey was conducted to obtain information on which specific intervention involved the parents in their child's art and P.E. classes. The survey also asked whether the parents were able to attend the Fine Arts Experiences or if not, provide an explanation as to why they could not attend. The methods used to assess parent involvement were the parents questionnaires, student journals, parent contact logs, and the attendance at the Fine Arts Experiences.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

The assessment measures used included parent contact logs, student journals, Fine Arts Experiences, and parent surveys. This section provides the results from each assessment measure.

Parent Contact Log

The first method of assessment was the parent contact log. The number of entries recorded by the art and P.E. teachers was three. One telephone correspondence dealt with the study, and that was in regard to the use of the multipurpose room in case there would be another Fine Arts Night. The other two correspondences dealt with two entirely different matters. The first correspondence was by letter regarding a medical excuse for P.E. participation. The second was a personal contact regarding holiday art work for the Secret Santa Shop. Along with the parent contact log, student journals were also implemented in the students' art and P.E. classes.

Student Journals

The second method of assessment was the student journals. Journals were sent home October 10, 1997 and on April 3, 1998. Table 3 shows the number of journals sent home, and the number of journals returned the following week. Table 3 also shows how many journals were signed by a parent and how many were not. The table also provides whether a parental comment was made on the student journal. These comments related to the experiences their child was having in art and P.E.

The majority of the student journals were returned within the following week. Table 3 notes that the percentage of journals returned was a 100 percent in the fall for both art and P.E., and 89 and 90 percent, respectively, in the spring. Most parents

signed one or more pages of their child's journal. When given discussion prompts, some parents returned the journals with the answers their child had given during the discussion. Some answers were: My favorite art activity was Kachina dolls because I worked with my mom, my favorite P.E. activity was color catchers because I liked running back and forth, my least favorite art activity was winter scenes because I hate ripping, my least favorite P.E. activity was clean up your back yard because I dislike throwing. The trend of journals being returned was consistent both in the fall semester as well as the spring semester. While student journals got the parents involved at home, the Fine Arts Experiences allowed parents to be involved with their child at school.

Table 3

Categories and Number of Student Journals Returned and Signed

	Art Journals		P.E. Journals	
Categories	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
Sent home	60	67	65	66
Returned	60	60	65	60
Signed	44	45	46	36
Not signed	13	13	9	13
Comments	2	3	3	2

Fine Arts Experiences

The third method of assessment was the attendance of the Fine Arts Nights held on November 18, 1997 and on April 7, 1998. Table 4 shows the percentage of second grade and third grade parents who attended the experiences. This experience allowed second and

third grade parents, along with their children to participate in art and physical education activities. Although 75% answered, "they would attend", the attendance on the night of the experience was 43% in the fall, and 37% in the spring.

In comparison to the number of parents who met the two teachers at the Open House, the percentage of parents involved with the Fine Arts Experiences was greatly increased. Although there was a decrease in the third grade attendance for the spring Fine Arts Experience, there was an increase in second grade attendance. Perhaps the decline in third grade attendance was due to the limited time the parents had to prepare for this event.

Table 4

Percentage of Attendance at Fine Arts Night by Grade Levels

	% of attendance	
Grade Level	Fall	Spring
Third grade	36	24
Second grade	48	50

Student and parent journal pages (Appendix I) were filled out both nights of the Fine Arts Experiences. Parents and students alike shared the same sentiments about the evening. Parents commented: "It was fun," "I enjoyed working with my child," and "I felt like I was in school with my child." Students also wrote positive comments about the evening. "I liked working with my mom," and "I like drawing." The principal, who attended the first experience, was very positive of the outcome. He commented that the material taught was very appropriate and that the parents and students seemed to enjoy themselves. Both researchers came to

similar conclusions and were pleased with the turnout. Although the attendance for both Fine Arts Experiences stayed relatively the same, the teachers did notice different students and parents at the spring experience. In order to best analyze the interventions that were used, parent surveys were the final method of assessment.

Parent Surveys

The post parent survey was conducted to find out which assessment strategy worked best for each subject. The survey also asked what conflicts parents had which prevented them from attending the Fine Arts Experience. Twenty-six surveys were returned of the seventy sent home.

Table 5 shows that the Fine Arts Experiences were the most meaningful to parents surveyed. Some reasons stated were: "On hands experience is the best way to see what my daughter is doing," "Our child really enjoyed having mom and dad participate," and "Because we are doing it together. Children will remember that more as a part of their childhood." Although the Fine Arts Experience was the most chosen intervention, many parents felt the journals just as important. The surveys noted that the parents who were unable to attend the Fine Arts Experiences relied on the journals as their form of information. Some parents chose both the Fine Arts Experiences and journals, which explains the deviance from 100 percent in Table 5. Many parents stated they were unaware of the newsletters or they were never brought home by their child.

Table 6 compares the conflicts noted on both surveys that kept parents from attending the Fine Arts Experience. The table indicates that the percentage of conflicts remained similar. Many

parents stated that they had no conflict. When comparing the attendance with the number of parents who did not have a conflict the numbers are consistent. Therefore the researchers did reach the percentage of parents that responded positively. After gathering and analyzing the data the researchers have come to the following conclusions and recommendations.

Table 5

Percentage of Intervention Chosen by Parent

Journals	38
Newsletters	8
Fine Art Experiences	61

Table 6

Percentage of Parent Conflicts from Both Surveys

Conflicts	Pre-Survey	Post Survey
Work	25.00	19.00
Child care	13.00	23.00
Transportation	.06	.12
Other	.06	11.00
None	58.00	54.00

Conclusions and Recommendations

The solution strategy did have an effect on the problem. Parental involvement did increase because of the implementation of the project. The response to student journals, and the Fine Arts Experience showed parental involvement. However further work in addressing parent conflict must be done.

To further increase parent involvement, some recommendations are: modify the use of student journals, increase the number of Fine Arts Experiences and offer babysitting, and ask for parent volunteers to help with daily classes during school hours.

The student journals were very hard to implement and keep the momentum going throughout the study. Since the students only have art and P.E. once a week, it took up some valuable class time from their program. The grade levels that were chosen, second and third grade students, had low level writing skills. Therefore for them to write complete sentences that explained the lessons was beyond their capability. In addition it was also difficult to read their writing. One possible way to modify student journals would be to involve the classroom teacher. The students would use their classroom writing journal to include an entry of their favorite lesson from art and P.E. The art and P.E. teachers would review the activities at the end of the month, during that time the students would choose their favorite lesson and reflect on them. These entries would then be handed to the classroom teacher to submit them in their classroom writing journal. Another idea would be to use teacher generated journals. These journals would be created by the teacher using pictures to describe the activity, and facial expressions to show feelings. Students would then simply circle the picture of the activity and circle whether the liked or disliked the experience.

The Fine Arts Experience was the strength of the study. Parents and children enjoyed the time with one another. The children especially enjoyed the opportunity to share their art and P.E. lessons with their parents. This was noted in the student journals and in the parent journal pages filled out after each

activity. The atmosphere the night of the experience and the following day reflected a enthusiastic attitude from the principal, students and classroom teachers, as well as the teachers involved in the study. The experience promoted a sense of pride for all of the students who participated that night. This night also allowed the parents to catch a glimpse of a lesson from each fine arts program and therefore validated their purpose. The teachers found these experiences to be positive, however they would like to see the attendance increase the next time a Fine Arts Experience is offered. One suggestion for increasing the attendance would be to offer babysitting. By providing this service, parents would be able to attend the experience with their child while their other children would be supervised nearby. A second suggestion would be additional advertisement and daily reminders to the students over the intercom before the end of each school day. Another suggestion would be to offer a Fine Arts Experience on the weekend, when more parents are available.

The final suggestion for improving parent contact would be the addition of parent volunteers during school hours. A note explaining the need for parent volunteers, and the tasks they would perform, should have been established at the beginning of the study. This would promote parent participation and validate the need for parent involvement. This addition would allow parents who work in the evening hours to participate. By having a program available during the day and in the evening more parents can be reached. This would be something to try in the future to increase parent involvement within the fine arts programs. This process might have even reached those parents not able to attend the Fine Arts Experiences.

The study enlightened both teachers to the fact that parents do want to be involved in their child's education. Through the journal signatures and the Fine Arts Experience attendance, the teachers noted more involvement compared to the open house at the beginning of the year. Overall, the involvement did increase and parents were willing to devote their time to their children. Given the situation, many parents were happy to be involved.

Increasing parental involvement in art and P.E. is just a start to a growing need many schools are experiencing. If more teachers provided opportunities for parents, perhaps involvement would grow. All the blame should not be placed on the parents. Teachers of all subjects need to offer suggestions on how parents can help and provide opportunities for them in the classroom. In addition, schools should also accommodate the parents and provide opportunities to involve them. Schools need to make parents and teachers aware of the need to work together for the future of the children.

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APPENDIX A

PARENT LETTER

Dear Parents,

We are currently working towards our Master's Degree in Education through Saint Xavier University. In order to receive our degree we must complete an action research project. For our project we are seeking to increase parent involvement and awareness in art and physical education (P.E.) and we would like your assistance.

As part of our project, we will be initiating the following: parent questionnaire, student weekly journals, supplementary family activities, bimonthly newsletter and Fine Arts Experiences.

The results of our project will be presented in a paper, and at an exhibition in the spring. Your and your child's identity will not be recognized. All participation will be in keeping with normal school procedures and your child's grade will not be affected.

We are expecting this to be an exciting addition to our school year. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us at school. 630-213-5590.

Sincerely,
Miss Penny Kentz
Mrs. Lori Orman

APPENDIX B

STUDENT JOURNAL PAGE

Student Journal

Week #_____ Name:_____

1. **Today's activity was** _____.

2. **What I liked most about today's activity was** _____

_____

_____

_____.

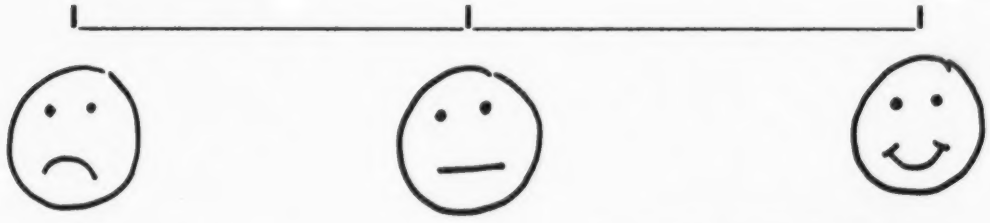
3. **What I liked least about today's activity was**_____

_____

_____

_____.

How I felt about today's activity



_____

Parent Signature

Parent Comments:

APPENDIX C

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Parents,

As you know, we are currently involved in a research project dealing with parent involvement in art and P.E. We would like your assistance in answering the following questions. Please return this questionnaire to your child's classroom teacher by _____. Thank you!

1. Are you aware that there is an art and P.E. program in your child's school?

2. Who is your child's art teacher?

3. Do you feel your child needs art? Why or why not? Please explain your answer.

4. Who is your child's P.E. teacher?

5. Do you feel your child needs P.E.? Why or why not? Please explain your answer.

6. If there was a Fine Arts Experience (when you would do art and P.E. with your child) would you attend? ___ yes ___no
   Which is the best evening for you?
   ___Monday ___Tuesday ___Wednesday

7. If you can not attend, would you please check the reason below?

   __work conflict __transportation problem

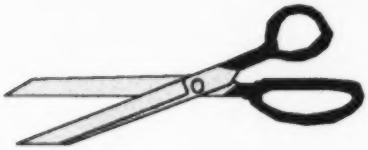
   __child care problem __other _____

APPENDIX D

FINE ARTS EXPERIENCE INVITATIONS

FINE ARTS EXPERIENCE

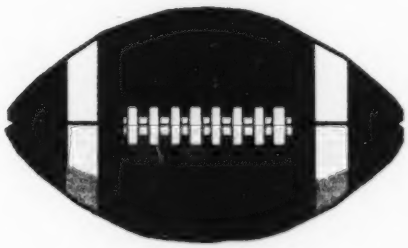
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18
7:00 to 9:00 p.m.



The second and third grade students along with their parents are invited to the first fine arts experience at Ontarioville School. Parents are REQUIRED to accompany their child and participate in an art and physical education lesson. We ask that no other children come along. Their will be a brief introduction at 7:00 in the multi-purpose room. There will be two 45 minute sessions following the meeting in the art and multi-purpose rooms.

We anxiously await your participation on this exciting night for you and your child!

Sincerely,
Miss Kentz
Mrs. Orman



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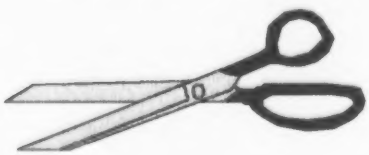
SECOND
FINE ARTS EXPERIENCE

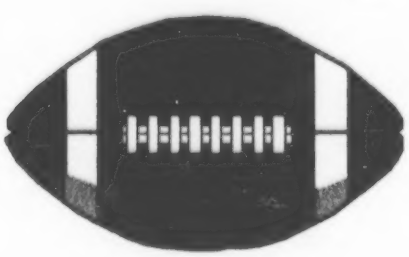
TUESDAY, APRIL 7
7:00 to 9:00 p.m.



The second and third grade students along with their parents are invited to the second fine arts experience at Ontarioville School. Parents are REQUIRED to accompany their child and participate in an art and physical education lesson. We ask that no other children come along. Their will be a brief introduction at 7:00 in the gym. There will be two 45 minute sessions following the meeting in the gym and multi-purpose rooms.

We anxiously await your participation on this exciting night for you and your child!

Sincerely,
Miss Kentz
Mrs. Orman



APPENDIX E

PARENT CONTACT LOG

PARENT CONTACT LOG

Student Name	Date	Phone	Letters	Inperson	Special Ev	Comments

APPENDIX F

MONTHLY FINE ARTS NEWSLETTERS

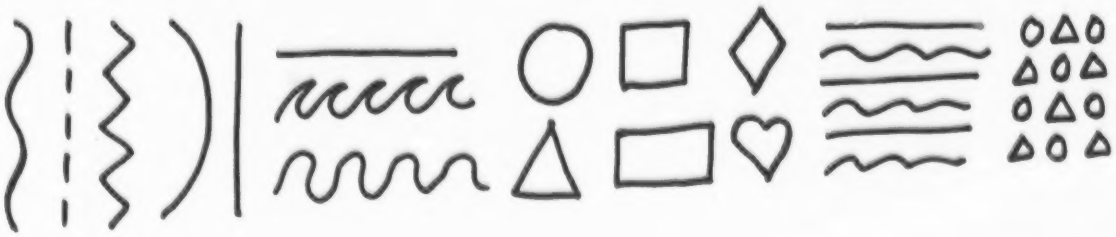
SEPTEMBER FINE ARTS NEWSLETTER

Dear Parents,

This monthly newsletter is to keep you informed about the curriculum in your child's art and PE classes. This newsletter should be shared with your child at home, likewise it will allow you to better understand what goes on in class. If you would have any questions regarding the content being taught, please feel free to contact us. Thank you. Miss Kentz and Mrs. Orman

ART

During the month of September, we have been reviewing lines, shapes, and patterns. The children have been working on these in class. The end result will be a "Air Balloon" picture for 2nd grade and a "Fish Pattern" composition for 3rd grade. Both grade levels have been completing journals after each lesson. Below are some examples of the types of lines, shapes, and patterns we have been doing.



PE

We have been busy getting our bodies in shape! I currently have a student teacher from Northern Illinois University. Her name is Mrs. Peddy. The 2nd graders have been working on tossing and catching bean bags. We have been developing our hand/eye coordination. The 3rd graders have been working on their soccer skills. We will be doing such skills as: dribbling, throw ins, heading, and goalie skills. Both grades have been filling out their student journals after each lesson.

OCTOBER FINE ARTS NEWSLETTER

Dear Parents,

We encourage you to sit down with your child and discuss this newsletter with them. This will give you a brief idea of what is currently going on in your child's art and PE classes.

ART

In 2nd grade, the students will be learning about neutral colors. These colors include: black, brown, and white. All students will be creating a "Haunted House" using all of these neutral colors. After this project, we will be focusing on Pueblo Indians. we will learn the history of these people and their lifestyles.

In 3rd grade, the students will be learning about symmetry. **Symmetry** means that both sides are the same. The students will be drawing a "Monster" with a vertical axis of symmetry. Following this project the students will also be studying Pueblo Indians.

PE

The 2nd graders have been working with small equipment. Our emphasis has been on bean bags. We have been tossing, catching, target tossing, partner tossing, and striking them with our hands and feet. They also learned the game "clean up your backyard". This game concentrates on throwing and kicking foam balls. We will be using ribbon wands, jump ropes, scarves, and hula hoops in the upcoming lessons.

The 3rd graders have been busy developing their soccer skills. We have been working hard on our dribbling, heading, throw ins, goalie skills, game rules, and sportsman like conduct. We are now into our modified games. Most teams have only 5 members on each team, this allows for maximum participation from all students. After this unit, we will begin flag football. The majority of our time will be spent on skills such as: throwing, catching, punting, quarterback and receiver responsibilities, and play development.

My student teacher, Mrs. Peddy will be saying good bye to all of us on October 17, 1997. It has been a pleasure having her here with us at Ontarioville. We wish her well and please come back and visit us!

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER FINE ARTS NEWSLETTER

ART

In art we have been doing native American art projects. This has resulted in us studying various Indian tribes and the art work that they produced during that time period. We have been creating masks and doing sand art. For the month of December, we have been creating decorations for the Secret Santa Shop. We are excited to be helping our parent organization with the decorations.

PE

We have been moving our bodies non stop all year and there is no stopping us now! We have been working with scooters. Scooters are much like roller skates, except you can't stand on the scooters. During our Fine Arts Experience the students taught their parents this lesson which had them working with partners on the scooters.

We wish everyone a happy and healthy holiday season and we will see you back here in 1998!

APPENDIX G

POST PARENT SURVEY

POST PARENT SURVEY

Dear Parents,

If you can remember back to the Fall semester this year, we were involved in an action research project for our masters class. We were trying to increase parent involvement within the art and PE programs for 2nd and 3rd grade students.

As a follow up to our action research project, we would like your assistance once again in answering this short survey. Please return these questionnaires to your child's classroom teacher by Monday, April 13, 1998.

Once again, we thank you for your cooperation. We greatly appreciate you and your efforts.

1. Did you and your child take time out to discuss the student journals at home? If Yes, what were your questions and / or comments? If No, what were the reasons for not reviewing the journals?

2. Were you aware that a monthly Fine Arts Newsletters was being sent home?
   ___ Yes ___ No

3. Did you take time to read the Fine Arts Newsletter?
   ___ Yes ___ No

4. Did you take time to read the fine arts section of the principal's monthly newsletter?
   ___ Yes ___ No

5. Did you attend the Fine Arts Experiences?
   ___ November 18, 1997 ___ April 7, 1998 ___ Both ___ Neither

6. What were your reasons for not attending a Fine Arts Experience?
   ___ Work Conflict ___ Transportation Problem
   ___ Child Care ___ Other_____

7. Which one of the 3 activities helped you to know more about your child in art?
   ___ Student Journals ___ Monthly Newsletters ___ Fine Arts Experiences

8. Which one of the 3 activities helped you to know more about your child in PE?
   ___ Student Journals ___ Monthly Newsletters ___ Fine Arts Experiences

9. Which activity made you, the parent feel more involved?
   ___ Student Journals ___ Monthly Newsletters ___ Fine Arts Experiences

10. Why did this activity make you feel more involved?

APPENDIX H

FINE ARTS ADDITION TO SCHOOL NEWSLETTERS

PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER INSERTS FOR FINE ARTS

JANUARY

ART

The 2nd graders worked on torn winter scenes. This process was difficult for some because the paper had to be torn instead of cut with scissors. Their scenes included themselves doing something in the snow. (snow angels, sledding, snowmen, etc).

The 3rd graders finished their Katchina dolls that they started during the Fine Arts Experience.

PE

Both the 2nd and 3rd graders continued working on their hand/eye coordination. This time we used balloons and tennis racquets. We kept the balloons in the air by using different body parts. When we used the racquets, we worked on our underhand and overhand swings.

FEBRUARY

ART

The 2nd graders created dinosaurs with clay. The first week they practiced with modeling clay. The following week they used self- hardening clay, which hardens when it dries. The third week they were given tempera paint of their choice to paint their dinosaurs.

The 3rd graders painted planets in space. They were introduced to warm and cool colors and tints and shades. The first week they painted space using cool colors. Cool colors are: purple, green, and blue. Black was mixed in to form a shade of these colors. The following week they painted the planets with warm colors. Warm colors are: red, orange, and yellow. White was mixed in to form tints. The last week they were given metallic paper and glitter to add details and stars.

PE

Both grade levels went to "clown college". We are trying our hands at juggling. The first week we got used to the way the scarf floats and we worked on catching them the correct way. The second week we worked on tossing and catching 2 scarves. We also learned the process to toss and catch. (pink scarf, then orange scarf) The third week we tried to add the yellow scarf! This was a challenge for most of the students. It was fun to hear them saying, "pink, orange, yellow" all class period. By the end of the class most were juggling!!!

MARCH

ART

The 2nd graders worked on 3 dimensional self-portraits. They cut circles and glued them to form a 3 dimensional shape. Using scrap paper, they created eyes, mouth, hair, and clothing. Facial proportions were reintroduced to aid in the production of their face. Some students went as far as creating jewelry and designs on their clothing.

The 3rd graders created place mats. They used complimentary colors to weave their place mats. This process taught them how to weave over, under. This weaving would be the background, representing a place mat, for their sandwiches.

PE

The 2nd and 3rd graders learned the game Mat Ball. This game is much like kickball, except that you use gym mats for the bases and the rules are slightly modified. One of the big modifications is that once you are on a base, you don't have to run to the next base unless you think you have to time. The kids love this game and I see more participation and teamwork because of the rules.

APPENDIX I

PARENT JOURNAL PAGE

PARENT JOURNAL

1. The activity was_____

2. What did you like about the activity?

3. What did you not like about the activity?

4. What would you change about this activity?

5. Would you attend another Fine Arts Night?

__yes __no

Why or Why not?

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